

## *Transgender teenager sues McDonald's*

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*Zikerria Bellamy, a teenager in the US who changed her gender from male to female, is taking legal action against the fast food chain McDonald's for alleged discrimination. Andy Gallacher reports:*

Zikerria Bellamy is a 17 year-old male who's been **living as a female** for about the past six years. **According to a complaint, filed by** the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, the teenager **applied for a job** at a McDonald's restaurant in Orlando. **It's alleged** that two managers at **the branch** refused to give Miss Bellamy an interview and on one occasion a manager saw the teenager, who arrived wearing a suit, and laughed at her. The complaint goes on **to claim** that one of the managers later left an **insulting** voice message on Miss Bellamy's answering machine. It's alleged the manager used **a gay slur** and informed the teenager that she'd never be given a job. A spokesman for **the branch** here in Florida said that McDonald's had **a zero tolerance policy prohibiting discrimination or harassment**. Most US states don't have laws that specifically protect transgender people in **the workplace**.

Andy Gallacher, BBC News, Florida

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>living as a female</b>	someone who was born as one gender (here, male) has been dressing and behaving like the opposite gender (here, female). A transgender person may also take drugs and have surgery to change their gender from male to female or from female to male
<b>according to a complaint, filed by</b>	from the point of view of the person or people bringing a case in front of a judge
<b>applied for a job</b>	asked for employment
<b>it's alleged</b>	it is suggested, without proof, that someone has done something wrong
<b>the branch</b>	the office, shop or here, restaurant, that forms part of a large business organisation with many other similar offices, shops or restaurants
<b>to claim</b>	to say that something is true or is a fact, although you cannot prove it and other people might not believe it
<b>insulting</b>	rude or abusive
<b>a gay slur</b>	a word or term that is insulting (as above) to homosexual people
<b>a zero tolerance policy prohibiting discrimination or harassment</b>	have laws and rules that mean people are not allowed to behave in an insulting or aggressive way to people based on their race, sex, religion, sexual preference, etc.
<b>the workplace</b>	a general term for a building or room where people work (i.e. an office, shop, factory, etc.)

**More on this story:** <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/8401568.stm>

**Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/wordsinthenews/2009/12/091209\\_witn\\_transgender.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/wordsinthenews/2009/12/091209_witn_transgender.shtml)